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Agenda items 17 and 18

The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Identical letters dated 12 December 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write with regard to the alarming Palestinian terrorist attack carried out today, Wednesday, 12 December 2007, against Israel.

Earlier today, at least 15 Qassam rockets were launched by Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip at the Israeli town of Sderot. The rockets caused injury to five Israeli civilians, who were slightly wounded from the barrage.

Israel views these terrorist attacks with grave severity, particularly in light of the fact that they occurred the morning prior to a meeting between the Israeli and Palestinian Authority chief negotiators, Ms. Tzipi Livni and Mr. Ahmed Queria, to launch the important peace talks discussed last month in Annapolis. The timing of the attack is another clear indication of the Palestinian failure to end the violence and terrorism against Israel. The terrorists obviously struck with the explicit intention of derailing our efforts in pursuit of peace and security.

More than 2,000 rockets have been fired by Palestinian terrorists since the beginning of 2007 and security services estimate that, since Hamas took control of the Gaza Strip in June 2007, a rocket is fired at Israel, on average, every three hours.

Israel retains the right to exercise itself in self-defence, as is the right to all sovereign nations, under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. Israel will continue to do all that is necessary to safeguard the lives of its citizens and ensure their right to live free from fear and terrorism.

I should be grateful if you would have the contents of the present letter circulated as a document of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 17 and 18, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dan **Gillerman**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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